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The  
Rural District Council of Sturminster



## ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH

FOR THE

Year ended 31st December, 1937.

THE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF STURMINSTER

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For the Year ended December 31st, 1937.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area 45,000 acres.

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population, 1937—8,107.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1937) according to Rate Books—2,570.

Rateable value—£33,366.

Sum represented by a penny rate—£146.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS.

		TOTAL.	M.	F.	
Live Births	Legitimate	102	57	42	Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 12.7.
	Illegitimate		2	1	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births 13.8.
Stillbirths—Legitimate		9	5	4	Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 14.3.
Deaths	...	115	59	56	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births, 18.0.
Deaths from Puerperal causes					
No. 29, Puerperal Sepsis	...			1	
No. 30, Other Puerperal causes				1	
					Total      2

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births—29.4.

Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births—30.3.

Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births—0.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)      ...      14.

Deaths from Measles (all ages)      ...      0.

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)      0.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years  
of age)      ...      ...      ...      1.

## **GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.**

There is one Sanitary Inspector in the district, who holds the Certificates of the Sanitary Inspectors' Examination Joint for both (a) Sanitary Inspector, and (b) Inspector of Meats and other Foods.

The most important item under this heading is the closure of St. Mary's Nursing Home at Sturminster. This Home supplied a much needed want, and its closure has proved a great misfortune to the District. The nearest Hospital or Maternity Home is some ten miles distant, and for some of the Maternity cases requiring, for various reasons, Institutional treatment, it is proving difficult to procure accommodation in the hospitals of adjoining Districts. In addition to this, the question of distance makes the position still more difficult. It proved impossible to find available funds to keep the Home going, this position being accentuated when the new Midwives Bill came into force. There is now no Maternity Home or Hospital in the District, and the matter is one that should receive the serious consideration of the Council.

I would draw the Council's attention to the necessity for the provision of a Mortuary in the District. At the present time any post-mortem examinations which have to be made are carried out in the dwellings. Apart from there being no facilities for this in a private house, it is very distressing for the other inmates, and is far from pleasant for the medical practitioner who is carrying out the examination.

## **SCHOOLS.**

The sanitary arrangements of the Council Schools at Sturminster are far from satisfactory. The lavatories are of the Pail Closet type, and their condition is anything but sanitary. The Education Authority undertook some time ago, to convert them to the Water-carriage system, but so far nothing has been done.

During the year the schools were closed at Child Okeford, Stalbridge, Marnhull and Stourton Caundle, on account of Influenza.

## **SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.**

### **1. (i) WATER.**

The district is now supplied with a very good comprehensive system of water mains supplied from five different springs.

Several small extensions were carried out during the year, a few further improvements are under consideration by the Council.

Samples of each of the sources of public supply were sent for Chemical examination twice during the year, and reported as perfectly satisfactory.

Instructions have now been given for chemical and bacteriological samples to be taken quarterly.

A large number of notices were served requiring a compulsory supply of water to be laid into houses, all of which were duly complied with.

*Samples for Chemical Analysis.*

No. of water samples from Public supplies	...	...	10
No. of water samples from Private sources	...	...	9

All the samples of the Public supplies were satisfactory, but in the case of the Private sources, six samples were unsatisfactory, and only three good.

Each of the unsatisfactory sources of supply were dealt with as soon as they were discovered.

(ii) **DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.**

The position regarding sewerage is substantially the same as last year and no further improvements have been carried out.

A large number of complaints of pollution of ditches have been received, and the Council has instructed that preliminary reports of proposals for sewerage systems shall be made in respect of the most populous villages.

*Stalbridge.* Considerable trouble has been experienced in dealing with excessive storm water at the sewerage works, and certain proposals have been included in a scheme of improvement and extension.

**2. RIVERS AND STREAMS.**

A Public Local Inquiry was held during the year into an application by the Council for consent of the Ministry of Health to take proceedings against the Hill View Dairy Co., Okeford Fitzpaine, under the Rivers (Prevention of Pollution) Acts.

Following this Inquiry and the receipt of sanction to prosecute, the Factory management intimated that they would undertake to put in a purification scheme, which has now been commenced.

The effluents from other Milk Factories in the district are now receiving the attention of the Council.

3. (i) **CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.**

During process of inspection under the Housing Acts, vaults are being eliminated in favour of the pail closet.

As no new sewers have been provided, very little increase has occurred in the water carriage system, although a good mains supply of water is generally available.

(ii) **PUBLIC CLEANSING.**

In March, 1937, the Council decided, following exhaustive reports and inquiries, to abandon the old system of the collection of house refuse by Contract, with a special rate in respect of the Parishes served, and instituted a comprehensive Refuse Collection by means of direct labour, and as a General Rate Charge.

Following due consideration and demonstrations, the Council purchased a Karrier Bantam refuse lorry which has since been working satisfactorily in accordance with a pre-determined schedule.

Disposal is effected by means of controlled tipping at three dumps in different parts of the district.

*Costing.*

		£	s.	d.
Cost of Contract prior to purchase of Lorry	...	89	7	6
Wages	...	186	8	11
Demonstration costs	...	13	3	2
Petrol, Oils, etc.	...	45	19	11
General Maintenance	...	4	2	8
Rent of Dumps	...	10	0	0
Garage rent	...	13	0	0
Insurance	...	6	5	0
Tax ( <i>note</i> one-and-a-half years)	...	45	15	0
Miscellaneous	...	11	15	11

*Loan repayments :—*

Principal	...	£23	6	8	£425	18	1
Interest	...	£6	3	2	<u>—</u>	29	9 10
		<i>Gross Cost</i>	...	£455	7	11	

*Sundry Income.*

		£	s.	d.
Salvage	...	18	16	3
Hire to other Departments	...	5	0	0
Cost of Demonstrations charged to Loan account	...	13	3	2
Charge for special services	...	2	9	6
Miscellaneous	...	2	15	0
		<u>£42</u>	3	11

*Nett Cost of Refuse Collection during year 1937*

... £413 4 0

*Analysis of Costs.*

Average Cost per collection	...	£1	19	10
Average Cost per house per collection	...	2.2d.		
Total number of houses collected in year	...	35,912		
Total Mileage	...	5,896		
Total No. of loads	...	550		
Average distance per load	...	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.		
No. of Parishes collected—Whole district	...	(21 Parishes).		

*General Remarks.*

Considering the small amount of complaints received and the reduction in the number of indiscriminate tips in lanes, etc., there is no doubt that the new refuse scheme is a success and a progressive policy of the Council.

**(iii) SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.**

Total number of Inspections (all headings)	...	...	...	1560
Total number of informal notices served	...	...	...	76
Total number of informal notices complied with	...	...	...	72
Total number of Statutory notices served	...	...	...	18
Total number of Statutory notices complied with	...	...	...	18

**FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.**

Total number of Inspections	...	...	...	22
Total number of informal notices served	...	...	...	2
Total number of informal notices complied with	...	...	...	2
Total number of outworkers	...	...	...	62
Total number inspected	...	...	...	48

**(iv) SHOPS.**

Total Number of Shops Inspected	...	...	...	...	6
Total Number of Notices served	...	...	...	...	Nil

**(v) SMOKE ABATEMENT.**

No complaints were made during the year of smoke nuisance.

**(vi) SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.**

There are no public or privately-owned swimming baths or pools in the district apart from the general use of the River Stour during the summer months for that purpose.

**(vii) ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.**

No case of infestation by Bed Bugs in any house was discovered throughout the year.

**HOUSING.**

**1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :—**

(1) (a) Total number of Dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	136
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	352
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above), which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	98
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	170
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	64
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	30

2.	<i>Remedy of Defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices :—</i>						
	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	...	...	...	...	...	15
3.	<i>Action under Statutory Powers during the year :—</i>						
(a)	Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16, of the Housing Act, 1936 :						
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	...	...	...	15
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—						
(a)	By owners	...	...	...	...	...	15
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners	...					Nil
(b)	Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—						
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice :—						
(a)	By owners	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners	...					Nil
(c)	Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :						
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	...	...	...	22
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	...	...	...	8
(d)	Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :						
(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...					Nil
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	...					Nil
4.	<i>Housing Act, 1936—Part IV.—Overcrowding :—</i>						
(a)	(i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	...	...	...	...	...	8
	(ii) Number of families dwelling therein	...					8
	(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein	...					50
(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	...	...	1
(c)	(i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	...	...	9
	(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases	...					46

(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	...	...	...	...	Nil
(e)	Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report.					

The Council has practically completed a building scheme for the erection of 90 houses for the purpose of re-housing persons displaced by reason of action taken under the Housing Acts.

#### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) *Milk Supply* :—

Total number of Cowkeepers	...	...	...	...	360
Total number of Dairies inspected	...	...	...	...	51
Total number of Notices served	...	...	...	...	15
Total number of Notices complied with	...	...	...	...	14

*Milk (Special Designations) Orders, 1923 and 1936.*

Three factories were licensed during the year to sell milk as "Pasteurised."

Number of Samples sent for analysis      ...      ...      ...      3

All the foregoing samples complied with the required standard.

(b) *Meat and other Foods.*

All meat retailed in shops and delivered in vans is inspected intermittently as the opportunity arises, and the slaughter of animals is notified under the Meat Regulations by means of a postcard system.

A veterinary inspector attends the local market in Sturminster Newton fortnightly on market days, but apart from this there is very little ante-mortem inspection of animals for slaughter.

The carcase and organs of a cow intended for sale for Christmas meat was seized as diseased meat, but the Council, on consideration of the case decided to warn the offender in lieu of proceedings under the Public Health Acts.

*Carcases Inspected and Condemned.*

	<i>Cattle exclud- ing Cows.</i>	<i>Cows.</i>	<i>Calves.</i>	<i>Sheep and Lambs.</i>	<i>Pigs.</i>
Number Killed (if known) ...		Not accurately		known.	
Number inspected ...	168	186	4130	748	393
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis.</i>					
Whole carcases condemned ...	Nil.	Nil.	2	Nil.	2
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned		Unknown.			
Percentage of the Number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis ...		Unknown.			
<i>Tuberculosis only.</i>					
Whole carcases condemned ...	Nil.	2	Nil.	Nil.	10
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned		Unknown.			
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...		Unknown.			
Total number of Licensed Slaughterhouses ... ...					14
Total number Inspected ... ... ...					14
Total number of Inspections ... ... ...					2522
Total number of Carcases inspected ... ... ...					5625
Meat condemned and destroyed :—					
Meat ... ... ... ...				(lbs.)	3540
Offal ... ... ... ...				(lbs.)	2311

# PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

## *Pathological and Bacteriological Examinations :—*

Nine Specimens were examined and reported upon during the year.

## NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

There were only five cases notified under this heading during the year. Of these, there was one case of Scarlet Fever, which was removed to the Isolation Hospital ; two cases of Acute Pneumonia ; and two cases of Erysipelas.

## TUBERCULOSIS.

### *New Cases and Mortality during the year.*

*New Cases.*                   *Deaths.*

AGE PERIODS.	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Respiratory		Non-respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1-	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5-	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15-	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25-	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35-	...	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
45-	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
55-	...	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
65-	...	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Totals	...	1	3	0	1	0	1	0

*Dated this 14th day of May, 1938.*

BERNARD S. HOLLICK,  
*Medical Officer of Health.*